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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

November 9, 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Your Conversation with Macmillan

Foy Kohler asked me to do this memorandum to save time. I have talked to him and Alexis Johnson, but Dean Rusk has not been available.

1. There is no difficulty at all on the Berlin side. We should tell him simply that Adenauer's visit seems to us very important, as you and he agreed in your last talk, and that we will welcome any comments and suggestions he may have before the meeting. Kohler tells me that our view on the substance of a negotiating position is pretty clear to the British and pretty well agreed with them: the main point is to get a satisfactory settlement for Berlin, protecting the three basic rights, and not to give away things in the larger context "of European security" that will break the morale of Germans. The notion of internationalized access is getting a favorable reception, and we have ideas about a guaranteed status for Berlin that might be more durable and more negotiable than current occupation rights. (There is no need to go into detail on this with the Prime Minister, but you may find the background useful). I did not talk with Kohler or anyone else about the possibility of your dropping in on the Prime Minister's weekend with de Gaulle, and this of course is the main point of the phone call.
2. I talked with Alexis Johnson and Walt Rostow, and they feel strongly that we should not foreshadow a decision either way on troops. What we can do is thank the Prime Minister for Lord Home's thoughtful message to Dean Rusk, and tell him that we have very much in mind the interlocking problems of Laos, South Vietnam, and Southeast Asia as a whole. (It looks as if the State-Defense recommendation might imply a time interval before we send troops, specifically for the purpose of trying to get Laos arranged, but this point should not be surfaced with the PM before you have had a chance to review it, since Rostow and probably Taylor will disagree.)
3. On atomic tests, you may want to tell him that you are answering his letter about underground testing and that perhaps he will already have heard of our reciprocal interest in Christmas Island. We think the underground tests can be arranged, and there are important international reasons why Christmas Island would be better for atmospheric testing than Eniwetok -- and technical reasons why it is better than any third place that might be available to us.
4. Other possible topics of conversation are Nehru, Friedrichstrasse, and Krishna Menon, but you hardly need any briefing on any of them.

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